

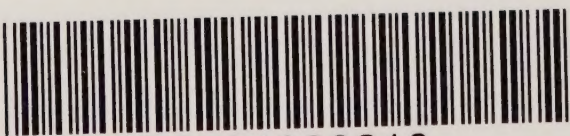
HOW TO COLLECT OLD MEDICAL BOOKS IN EUROPE

Where to Go and What to Look For

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AND
FELIX NEUMANN
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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The golden age of book collecting always seems to be in the time of one's great-grandfather or earlier, and no doubt Osler felt envy of Richard Mead. Nevertheless there was a time when giants like Osler, Cushing, Mackall and Wood roamed the earth with dominant dollar and powerful pound. Garrison gives a brief picture of it in this article which is reprinted in 1991 for the friends of EMERITUS BOOKS and OLD SOUTH BOOKS.

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WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR *

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

There are physicians who not infrequently apply to themselves what, it may happen, is one of their own favorite prescriptions — a summer vacation in Europe. To such, a few hints as to ways and means of locating rare medical books while abroad may not come amiss, while it may perhaps interest the returning traveler to survey a few actual or hypothetical experiences.

We will assume that our traveler, if not interested in the whole history of medicine, or at least a specialist, is at any rate sportsmanlike enough to care something about the classics in his favorite branch of medicine. To one of this stamp Europe is indeed the Happy Hunting Grounds — the most favorable haunt for the medical book-lover. On the Continent there is always an even chance of picking up some little treasure-trove of European medicine or even one of the earlier medical Americana for a song. But, as with hunting and fishing, there are more ways than one, so success oftenest comes to him who shuns "the madding crowd's ignoble strife." Where there is more competition among buyers than among sellers, prices are sure to be high and let no one fancy that the larger antiquarian bookstores in cosmopolitan centers will let anything go for less than it is worth. In an interesting talk before the Medical Library Association in the spring of 1909, Sir William Osler emphasized the point that, on account of the growing interest of medical book-fanciers in rare first editions and quaint folios, such things are becoming practically inaccessible by reason of the prohibitive

* From the Library of the Surgeon General's Office.

prices put on them by antiquarian booksellers. Reasonable figures, it seems, can only be had at some occasional auction sale or in out-of-the-way places in Italy. To illustrate this, he cited an experience of a copy of the "Inventum Novum" picked up for a lira, when a western colleague who was also an admirer of Auenbrugger had just paid \$100 (about 500 times as much) for the same classic in Germany. This is, of course, an exceptional piece of luck, yet it illustrates the value of frequenting the haunts of the *Kleinstädter* — the little stalls about Paris, the English cathedral and seaport towns, some quaint old city of the Low Countries, the little places nestled in the Swiss or Tyrolese Alps, the charming old towns of the Fatherland, famous in civilization and learning, and, above all those Italian cities of lesser rank, which Renan thought still "aglow with infinite glory"—Florence, Siena, Perugia, Padua, Milan, Turin. Let neither Venice nor the devious by-ways of the Eternal City be forgotten, nor Vienna and the Slavic and Scandinavian university towns. It is in the modest obscure book-stalls of places like these that one can buy to greater advantage, sometimes making remarkable finds at prices four or five times less than the experienced antiquarian would sell them for.

As the true traveler is not he who rushes from pillar to post, annihilating space and time in his mad effort to see everything at once, but rather he who is inclined to "loaf and invite his soul," to saunter, to *flâner* and to absorb the atmosphere of some beloved place, so there is a gentle art of book-buying as well as of book-selling, the rudimentary features of which are known to every true bibliophile. We can only deal in glittering generalities, but those of the true cult inevitably get the browsing habit. As in bazaars in the far East, shopping is always a sort of social diversion, so the book-lover *pur sang* will never ask for a coveted volume point-blank, for, if the dealer happens to be one who has a sliding scale of prices, he is sure to profit by so naïve an interest, especially if his prospective customer is perceived to be a foreigner. As Balzac says: "Too much confidence diminishes respect, while others take advantage of excessive enthusiasm." If time permits, it is better to spar for points. Look as innocent as possible, and when the zealous bookseller comes smilingly forward, simply say that you want to look around a little. Left to your own resources walk from shelf to shelf,

addressing to the bookseller now and then some question which will bring you nearer your goal. Perhaps, like the unfortunate antiquarian in Henry James' remarkable study "The Bench of Desolation," your dealer may have a fine feeling for literature itself. In this case you can safely chat with him about the desired volume, and it would be a very poor bookseller indeed who failed to produce it under these conditions along with some others. He will, in fact, show you these books in the spirit of the hidalgo in "Hernani"—*J'en passe et des meilleurs*. You examine them at leisure and finally say, in passing, that while it is not exactly of great interest to you, you might buy this volume if it does not come too high, or else simply price the books indifferently one by one. The dealer, happy that he is, after all, about to make a sale to the stranger, names a moderate price, and the purchaser walks away in the happiest frame of mind. On the other hand, a bookseller who nags his prospective customers with his importunities, however polite or well-meant, is not likely to attract them. It is an unwritten law of human nature that those who make social or other advances too rapidly usually turn out to be suspicious acquaintances and a fair standard of self-respect, for men and women alike, is summed up in the famous inscription over the gateway of Krupp's gun-foundry at Essen: "Those applying for permission to see these works may expose themselves to a refusal." As a rule, however, such defensive tactics are seldom necessary with the gentle antiquarian who is too frequently of a retiring, if not of a negative, disposition.

In the matter of prices in general, whether printed in a catalogue or given by word of mouth, we should say that, provided one can afford it, the price asked for any good book is seldom too much. It is always well to remember, too, that what seems a large sum of money, as given in francs, marks, lire, crowns or roubles is, after all, not so much in United States money or as compared with American prices for the same book. The genial Autocrat once described himself as springing like a tiger on some coveted volume and the real ardor of the chase lies not so much in driving a bargain as in getting what one wants by the hunting instinct.

In seeking for rare medical books it is quite necessary to have the collector's *flair* for the quarry—to know what to look for. Yet, even when this condition is fulfilled, a possible purchase must still depend on two

determinants: the extent of the purchaser's inclination and the length of his purse. Readers of Goethe's autobiography will remember how he advises the connoisseur in painting to buy the best pictures of his own period rather than old masters because, for the same or even less money he can in this way build up a collection which will become choice and rare enough in his own life-time. This is even more true of the medical classics for, as we have said, prices for the older books are even now so prohibitive that they can only be collected by book-clubs and libraries or else by the few physicians who may be accounted "wealthy" in the financial sense. At a time when American enthusiasts will pay as much for the Baltimore edition of Edgar Poe's maiden efforts in verse as they would for the first folio of Shakespeare (\$2,900 in two instances), it is hardly likely that the greater classics of medicine — the Greeks, Vesalius, Paré, Harvey, Sydenham — will go a begging, unless there should be some unimaginable world-slump in prices. The old Greek and Roman classics are, in most cases, fine specimens of the work of the great Renaissance printers, and many of these are therefore the *ultima Thule* of the collector. As Osler has said, "An Aldine here and there, a few fine parchment-bound Juntas, an Oporinus or a Froben in the original boards and stamped pigskin, a fine Paris Stephanus, an Elzevir or a Plantin, give tone to the shelves, just as do the Stuarts and Copleys to the dining-room in an old mansion."¹ The antiquarian dealers know this and charge accordingly. Some of these specimens of fine printing, however — the Elzevirs in particular — have greatly decreased in value of late years and are consequently more easily obtainable by those who fancy them, while the books of the English printers of the sixteenth century — Wyer, Pynson, Copeland — have increased in value from fifty to a hundred fold on account of their present scarcity, originally due to the destruction of so many of them during the Civil Wars of England and in the Great Fire of London in 1666. For example, the different imprints of Linacre's translations of Galen and many of the English anatomical classics of the post-Vesalian period are exceptionally hard to come at, and, in each case, like the bronze in Browning's poem, "esteemed a rarity." Should any collector be lucky

1. Bull. Med. and Chir. Fac., Maryland, Baltimore, 1909, i, 254.

enough to bag any piece of early printing, English or other, he may remember that it is quite immaterial if the book has no intrinsic value in itself. Any specimen of early printing or of a famous printer has a bibliographic value which determines its price irrespective of its intrinsic value. For this reason, we repeat, the books most likely to be within the average collector's reach are those of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and, of these, stray "bargains" at stalls will usually be in pamphlet form (within a hundred pages in size). By sheer luck a collector might happen on a Rösslin, a Cornaro, a Fracastorius, a Paracelsus, with its flamboyant title-page in red and black letters, an Athanasius Kircher or even a Wepfer on apoplexy offered at a reasonable figure somewhere on account of its small size or shape, and classics of these dimensions increase in number as we approach the modern period. The small-sized book, like the short story, the lightning express, the telephone, wireless, the motor-car, the airship, predigested foods, tabloid preparations, heart-to-heart talks and saltatory evolution per social uplift is one of those frequently unattainable ideals of modern life which illustrate Maupertuis' principle in mechanics: that we aim to get at anything or to get out of any difficulty by the shortest possible cut. It is in the eighteenth century that we begin to find the little classics or *Kleinmeister* — things like Fothergill on diphtheritic sore-throat (1747), Caspar Friedrich Wolff's "Theoria generationis" (1759), Auenbrugger's "Inventum novum" (1761), Sigault on symphysiotomy (1777), Pott on spinal caries (1779), Mesmer on animal magnetism (1779), Withering on the foxglove (1785), and Jenner's different pamphlets on vaccination. In the nineteenth century the number of these pamphlet classics begins to increase apace, following the modern tendency toward specialization, and the specialist will naturally keep his eye open for the famous monographs on his particular subject. We may expect the anatomist to look not only for the numerous post-Vesalian pamphlets of the seventeenth century but also for the essays of Cooper, Wrisberg, Meckel, Lieberkühn, Zinn, *hoc genus omne*, for the beautiful title-page of Lorenzo Bellini on the structure of the kidneys (Florence, 1662), and for Goethe on the intermaxillary bone (Jena, 1786); the adept in finer anatomy for Schwann (1839) and Schleiden (1842), Gerlach (1858), Max

Schultze on protoplasm (1867), Walther Flemming on cell division (1882), Golgi (1885), Ehrlich on intravital staining (1886), and Ramon y Cajal's "Nuevo concepto" (1892). The physiologist might begin with the English classics on respiration and keep in mind a long list of attractive desiderata of small size, including Galvani on animal electricity (1792), Sir Charles Bell's "New Idea" (1811), Marshall Hall on reflex action (1833), Beaumont on the gastric juice (1833), Purkinje on ciliary motion (1835), Helmholtz on the conservation of energy (1847), the epoch-making monographs of Claude Bernard, Pflüger on electrotonus (1859), Marey on the sphygmograph (1860), Fritsch and Hitzig on cerebral localization (1870), Hering on facultative organic memory (1870), or Bayliss and Starling on the chemical regulation of the secretions (1904). The clinician may reflect that there is probably only one copy of Parkinson on the shaking palsy (1817) in the United States, and perhaps only two to be found in any English library;² he will know why Heine on infantile paralysis (1840) or Currie (1797) and Brand (1863) on hydrotherapy in typhoid are so much worth having nowadays and why the second edition of Laënnec would be quite as valuable a possession as the first. The surgeon will naturally value the original pamphlets on anesthesia, or Lord Lister's original paper on antiseptic methods (1867), or Esmarch on hemostatic bandaging (1873); the obstetrician and gynecologist will probably hold in especial esteem Paré on podalic version (1555), Deventer on pelvic deformities (1701), Holmes (1842) and Semmelweis (1861) on puerperal fever, Simpson on chloroform (1847), Marion Sims on vesicovaginal fistula (1853), Noeggerath on latent gonorrhea (1872), Parry on extra-uterine pregnancy (1876), Säger on Cesarean section (1882), Credé on infantile conjunctivitis (1884), or Tait on pelvic hematocele (1888). The ophthalmologist will have a long list of "real values," ranging from Bartisch's "Augendienst" (1583), Kepler's "Paralipomena" (1604), Scheiner's "Oculus" (1619), Descartes' "Dioptrics" (Elzevir of 1644) to Brisseau (1706) and Maître-Jan (1707) on cataract, Dalton on color-blindness (1794), Young on astigmatism (1801), Helmholtz on the ophthalmoscope (1851),

2. See Catalogue of the Manchester Medical Society, 1890, p. 872. Also: Supplement to catalogue of the library of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 1863-70, 1870, p. 186.

Snellen on test-types (1862) or the Sydenham imprint of Donders on accommodation and refraction (1864). The throat specialist will not forget the three pamphlets of Manuel Garcia (1855), Türck (1858), and Czermak (1858) on laryngoscopy, Bouchut and Trousseau on laryngeal intubation (1858) and the earlier reprints of O'Dwyer. The expert in medical jurisprudence will, of course, have a lively interest in the Caroline Criminal Constitutions (1533) and the little treatises of Codronchi (1597), Fedeli (1602) and Zacchias (1621).

There are some medical books of exceptional rarity such as the early tracts on syphilis, Bagellardo on pediatrics (1472), Grassi on eye diseases (1475), the Florentine *editio princeps* of Celsus (1478), the booklet on personal hygiene which Moses Maimonides wrote for the use of Saladin (Florence, 1478), Mattioli's commentary on Dioscorides (1544), the first edition of Sydenham's "Schedula Monitoria" (1666) and Sanctorius' commentary on Avicenna (1625) concerning which Dr. Weir Mitchell relates that it took Quaritch seven years to find him a copy.³ Chances of finding these are variable. As Dr. Billings has remarked,⁴ a collector of to-day is as likely to pick up Gordon's "Lily," Gaddesden's "Rose" or any of the incunabula listed by Hain as the early American tracts of Thacher, Boylston and Waterhouse on small-pox. Many of the best-known classics of more recent times, such as Daviel on cataract extraction (1753), the original Latin of Wolff's great monograph on the development of the intestines (1764-6), Lavoisier's discovery of oxygen (1775), Parry on exophthalmic goiter (1786), McDowell on ovariectomy (1816), Wöhler's synthesis of urea (1828) or Gregor Mendel on plant hybridity (1865) are buried in the pages of rare periodicals.

A special class of books which will grace any public or private collection is that which includes the best specimens of anatomic illustration, from the imposing woodcuts of Vesalius and Stephanus and the splendid copper-plates of Casserius, Bidloo, Ruysch, Mascagni and Albinus, down to the spirited steel engravings which Anderloni made from Scarpa's pen-drawings, or the self-illustrated "Dissections" of Sir Charles Bell. In this class one might include the actual anatomic works of

3. Tr. Cong. Am. Phys. and Surg., 1891, New Haven, 1892, ii, 166.

4. Tr. Internat. M. Cong., Lond., 1881, i, 60.

great artists—the folios of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings in red chalk (1898), Albrecht Dürer on human symmetry (Nuremberg, 1532), Rubens' "Théorie de la figure humaine" (1773), John Flaxman's "Anatomical Studies" (1833), and perhaps even a specimen or two of those curious short-hand notations of human anatomy from the pencil of Rodin. One rare and valuable example of pathologic illustration, the "Selecta Praxis Medico-Chirurgica" of Alexander Auvert (Paris, 1856), has a unique interest. It consists of a series of masterly delineations of disease, executed partly by means of colored line engraving, partly in stipple retouched in watercolor, and is much esteemed, not only for its accuracy of detail, but particularly as a wonderful example of illustration in colors. The only copy of the first edition in the United States is to be seen in The Library of the Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of Maryland.

A word about Spanish medical books, in which most medical libraries are known to be sadly deficient. Spain may seem as virgin soil to the collector, yet the medical books printed in Spain and Portugal before 1500, and even up to 1550, are of such extreme rarity and their value so well-known even to the obscurest Spanish bookseller, that there is little chance of finding them, while the modern medical literature of Spain, always excepting the writings of Gimbernát and Ramon y Cajal, has nothing of more than ordinary interest. Of especial value are the surgical treatises of Julian Gutierrez (1494), Juan de Aviñon (1545) and Francisco Arceo (1574), Valverde's "Anatomy" with its characteristic copperplates (1559) and Joseph d' Acosta's "Historia natural y moral de las Indias" (1590), which contains the first account of mountain sickness. A find which might dignify any surgeon's collection would be a possible copy of the rare Spanish translation of Lanfranc's "Cirurgia," published at Seville in 1495. As a specimen of splendid typography it is comparable with a black-letter Chaucer.

Collecting old books in midsummer might be likened to the almost outworn boyhood diversion of looking for primitive stone implements over tilled fields in the springtime. As the farmer's ploughshare used to turn up a new crop of Indian arrow-points and stone axes regularly each succeeding year, so the owner of valuable books, is for various reasons, often disposed or obliged to

get rid of some of them as summer approaches. A good rule is, always to look for a book highly valued in a given country in some other country. For example, Schoepf's "Materia medica Americana" (Erlangen, 1786), of which we know of only three copies in America, might very well turn up somewhere in Germany at a moderate price.

It is hoped that these random notes may emphasize a few bibliographic values which the specialist, from his deeper knowledge, will not regard as impertinent.

In the same impartial spirit we subjoin a list of European antiquarian bookstores which may perhaps serve as a miniature Baedeker for medical bibliophiles.

MINIATURE BAEDEKER FOR MEDICAL BIBLIOPHILES

City.	Firm and Street Address.	Stock.
<i>England:</i>		
Cambridge	Elijah Johnson, 30 Trinity St.	Medical.
Cardiff	Spottiswoode & Co., 12 James St.	Medical.
Liverpool	W. M. Murphy, 79 and 57a Renslaw St.	
	Henry Young & Sons, 12 South Castle St.	
London	Dulan & Co., 37 Soho Square	Medical.
	Messrs. Ellis, 9 Ray St.	
	Wm. A. & G. Foyle, 135 Charing Cross Rd., W. C.	Medical.
	W. Glaisher, 265 High Holborn	Remainders.
	G Keener & Co., 16 a, Red Lion Square.	Medical.
	Maggs Bros., 109 Strand, W. C.	
	Pickering & Chatto, 66 Haymarket, S. W.	
	Bernard Quaritsch, 11 Grafton St., W.	
	Wesley & Son, 28 Essex St., Strand W. C.	Medical.
Manchester	Albert Sutton, 43 Bridge St.	Science.
Oxford	Parker & Son, 27 Broad St.	Science.
<i>Scotland:</i>		
Aberdeen	James G. Bisset, 85 Broad St.	Medical.
Edinburgh	William Bryce, 54 Lothian St.	Medical.
	John Grant, 31 George IV Bridge	Remainders.
	John F. Mackenzie, 11 Teviot Pl.	Medical.
<i>Austria-Hungary:</i>		
Vienna	Gilhofer & Ranschburg, Bogner-gasse 2.	
Budapest	Fritz Sachs, Andrassy Strasse 37, VI.	
<i>Belgium:</i>		
Bruxelles	Edmond Deman, 86 rue de la montagne.	
<i>France:</i>		
Dijon	Felix Rey, 26 rue de la liberté	Medical.
Montpellier	Coulst & Fils, 5 grande rue	Medical.
Paris	Theophile Belin, rue Cambon	
	Ch. Chadenat, 17 quai des grands Augustin.	
	J. Gamber, 7 rue Danton	
	Arthur Hermann, 6 rue de la Sorbonne.	Medical.
	Henri Leclerc, 219 rue St. Honoré.	
	H. Welter, 4 rue Bernard, Palissy.	
Toulouse	Vincent Riviere, 6 rue de lois	Medical

City.	Firm and Street Address.	Stock.
<i>Germany:</i>		
Berlin	Martin Boas, Karlstrasse 25, N. W.	Medical.
	Martin Breslauer, Unter den Lin- den 16. W.	
	R. Friedlander & Sohn, Karl- strasse 11, N. W.	Science.
	W. Junk, Kurfürstendamm 201, W.	Science.
	Leo Liepmannssohn, Bernburger- strasse 14. S. W.	
	Mayer & Muller, Prinz Louis Fer- dinand Strasse 2, N. W.	Medical.
	J. A. Stargardt, Lützowstrasse 47 W.	Science.
	Speyer & Peters, Unter den Lin- den 43. N. W.	Med. and Science.
Bonn	M. Lempertz, Franziskaner- strasse 6.	
Brunswick	Graff's Buchhandlung, Neue Strasse 18 a.	
	Wilhelm Scholz, Ehrenbrecht- strasse 4.	
Cologne	J. M. Heberle, Friesenplatz 15...	
	Paul Neubner, Hohestrasse 137..	
Dresden	Richard Bertling, Victoriastrasse 6.	
	von Zahn & Jaensch, Waisen- hausstrasse 10.	
Erlangen	Max Mencke.....	Medical.
Frankfurt a. M.	Baer & Co., Hochstrasse 6.....	
	Isaac Goar, Junghofstrasse 5....	
Göttingen	Deuerlich'sche Buchhandlung....	
Hamburg	Jurgensen & Becker, Königstrasse 12.	
Hannover	Cruse's Buchh. and Antiquariat, Gr. Aegidienst. 4.	
Heidelberg	Ernst Carlebach, Hauptstrasse 136.	
Jena	Fr. Strobel.....	Science.
Karlsruhe	A. Bielefeldt's Buchh.....	
Kiel	Walter G. Muhlau, Brunswicker- strasse 29 a.	
Königsberg	F. Raabe's Nachfolger, Fransoe- sches St. 3.	
Leipzig	Gustav Fock, Schlossgasse 7/9... Medical. Otto Harrassowitz, Ormerstrasse 14.	
	Karl W. Hiersemann, König- strasse 3.	
	B. Liebisch (K. F. Koehler's Ant.), Kurprinzenstrasse 6.	Medical.
	Alfred Lorentz, Kurprinzen- strasse 10.	Medical.
Munich	J. Halle, Ottostrasse 3 a..... Medical. Ludwig Rosenthal, Hildegard- strasse 14.	Medical.
Nuremberg	J. A. Stein's Buchh., Haupt- markt 28.	Medical.
	F. Weigel's Nachfolger, Adler- strasse 6.	
Stuttgart	J. Scheible, Hauptstätter- strasse 70.	
Tübingen	Franz Pletzker.....	Medical.
<i>Holland:</i>		
Amsterdam	Frederick Muller & Co., Doelen- straat 10.	Medical.
The Hague.....	Martinus Nijhoff, Nobelstraat 18.	
Leyden.....	Burgersdijk & Niernans, Nieuw- steeg 1.	Medical.

City.	Firm and Street Address.	Stock.
<i>Italy:</i>		
Florence	G. Dotti, via del proconsola 21.. Otto Lange, via Montebello 2.... Leo S. Olscki, Lungarno Acciaiol oli 4.	
Leyhorn	Guglielmo Cassuto, Scalo Man zoni 5.	
Milano	Ulrico Hoepli, Galleria de Cris toforis 59-63.	
Naples	Francesco Percella, Museo 18....	
Palermo	Alberto Remer.....	
Rome	C. Lang & Co., via Bocca di Leone 13. Loescher & Co., Corso Umberto I. L. Merlino, via Crescenzo 9.... A. Nardecchia, via Universita 42/43.	
Siena	E. Torrini, via Cavour 18.....	
Turin	Carlo Clausen, via Po 19..... F. Casanova & Co., Piazza Carig nano. G. Imhof, via venti Settembre 9.	
Venice	L. Gattinoni, S. Apollinare 1481.	
<i>Spain:</i>		
Barcelona	J. B. Aragonès, Calle Provenza 202. G. Garcia Rico, Desengano 29...	
Madrid	Rafael Royo, Paja 13/15..... Arturo Beyer y Cia, San Ber nardo 37.	
<i>Switzerland:</i>		
Basel	Basler Buch u. Antiquariatshand lung, Baumleingasse 10.	
Bern	A. Francke.....	
Zurich	Schweizerisches Antiquariat, Rö merstrasse 25.	

